

JANUARY 2005

Facets

F O R W O M E N

Sylvia Munsen
***A Woman to
Sing About***

**Hail to the
Bus Driver**

**The Resolution
Solution**

Notes from the newsroom

By Frances Wilke
Facets Editor



January is here and so are all the cold, snow and resolutions that go with it. In this issue of Facets, I

would like to introduce you to two people each with 10 years of service to Ames — Sylvia Munsen and Rosemary Scott, two very different women who both love their work.

Scott drives a Cy-Ride bus. In all kinds of weather, she is at her job, getting people where they need to go. We often take driving our cars for granted, yet

with parking hassles, high gas costs, or no license or car to drive, there is a significant need for Ames' bus services. Thank goodness, Scott and her fellow drivers do their job well and with a smile too.

Watching the news lately, I have thought about the Ukrainians singing in the streets to keep their spirits up and bodies warm during a difficult time in their history. Singing is more or less an international practice of reaching out to our fellow man. The Austrians have the Vienna Boys Choir and New York City is justifiably proud of The Harlem Boys Choir. Both are world famous, but here in

central Iowa we have the Ames Children's Choirs that effectively do the same thing.

I predict they too will have great fame in the coming years. With a lot of hard work and not much money, Munsen has uncovered and nourished these talented singers into a band of young ambassadors that should make Ames and all of Iowa proud. Auditions are twice a year and all are welcome. I regret that I did not offer this opportunity to my son, Thomas.

I have been hearing from folks around town about how much they like Facets, only they call it "Faces." From time to

time, we publish a feature called "Facet Faces," so I can understand the confusion.

Last month, Coordinating Editor Rebecca A. Petersen wrote a letter to George W. Bush, which generated a few negative responses. I felt this was a young woman with something important to say, and I wanted to give her voice a venue. I welcome anyone to submit their own thoughts to Facets, as I want to make it a home for many different views and opinions. The chance is yours. ♦

Thanks,
Franny

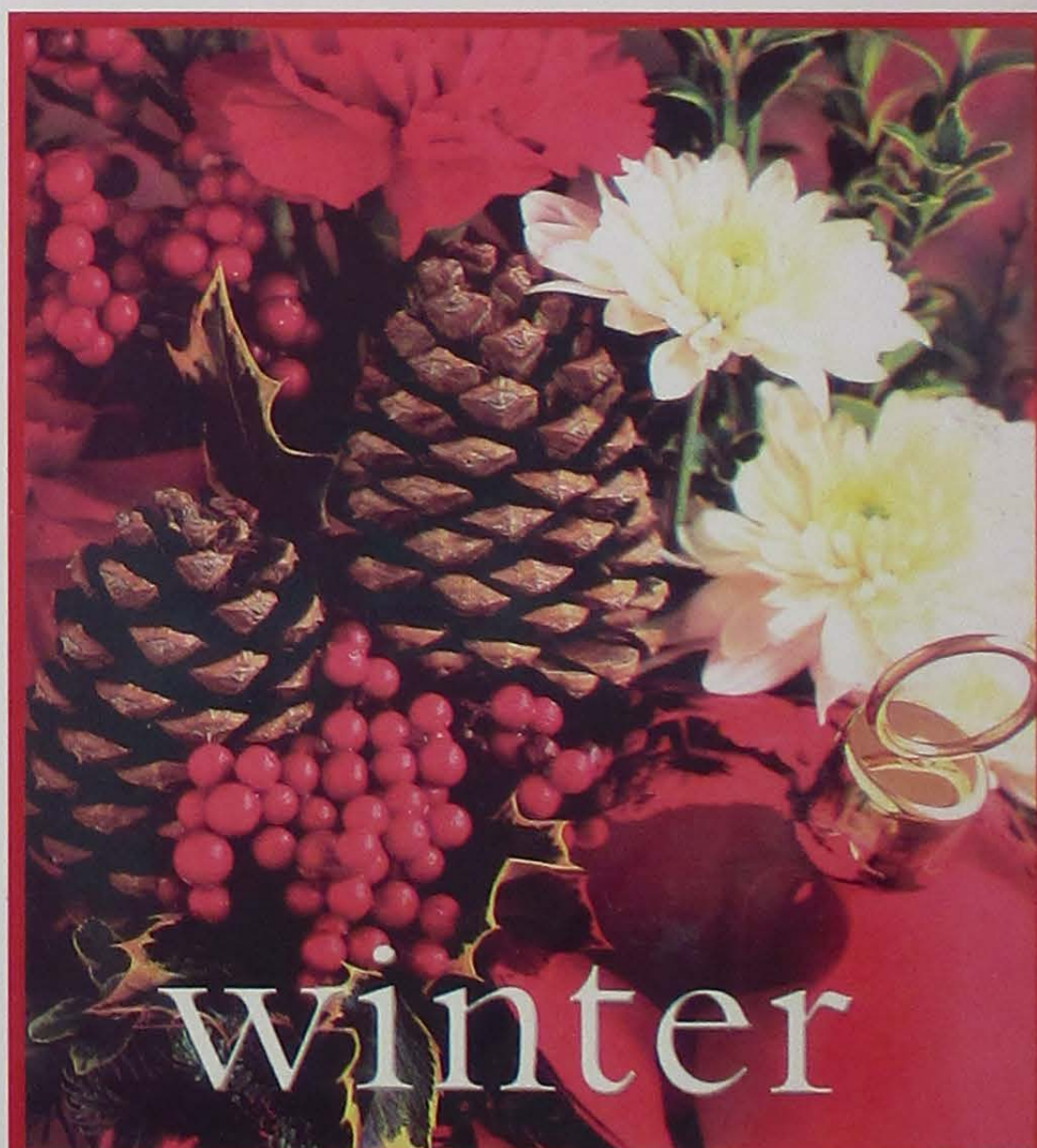
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Facet > 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.

2. The particular angle from which something is considered.

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FOR
women

women on the move

If you know of a woman who should be featured in "women on the move", write to facets@amestrib.com or call 232-2160.

Erica Ziel joined the staff of Heartland Fitness Center as a fitness instructor. Ziel is a senior in health and fitness management at Iowa State University and is a certified personal trainer.

Cornelia Flora, an Iowa State University distinguished professor of agriculture and sociology was recognized for her leadership in addressing important rural social issues. Flora received a special award from the U.S. Forest Service and was identified as one of 14 women "Agents of Change" in a new book about sustainable agriculture.

Mary Beth Oostenbrug was named executive director of Friendship Ark in Ames. Friendship Ark is a Christian-based organization that provides living and community services for adults with disabilities. Oostenbrug has lived in Ames for 17 years, is a graduate of ISU and a member of the Collegiate United Methodist Church.

Dominique Bryant was named trust officer for the U.S. Bank private client group in Ames. She is responsible for administering trust accounts as well as estate and financial planning. Bryant resides in Ames with her husband, Roger, and her daughter, Rachel. Her son, Nicolas, is in the U.S. Army, and is currently stationed at Fort Benning, Ga.

Annaliese Baker, assistant professor of music and faculty member in ISU Theatre, has been chosen to exhibit a series of costume designs at the World Stage Design 2005 in Toronto next March. Baker's costume designs for the play "An Experiment With An Air Pump" were among 55 designs selected from 244 eligible designs. She is one of only 15 United States designers chosen for the international competition.

Michelle King, sales coordinator at the Iowa State Center, received a Governor's Volunteer Award for her work as president of the Central Iowa Tourism Region.

Kris Phelps, manager of Iowa State University's off-campus credit programs and distance education for Continuing Education and Communication Services, has been elected vice president-elect (chapters) of the United States Distance Learning Association. Phelps also serves as president of the Iowa Distance Learning Association.

Laura Doering, Iowa State University's associate registrar, received an exemplary service award from the Upper Midwest Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. The award recognizes Doering's contributions to the association as its former president and as the leader of its recent incorporation project. ♦

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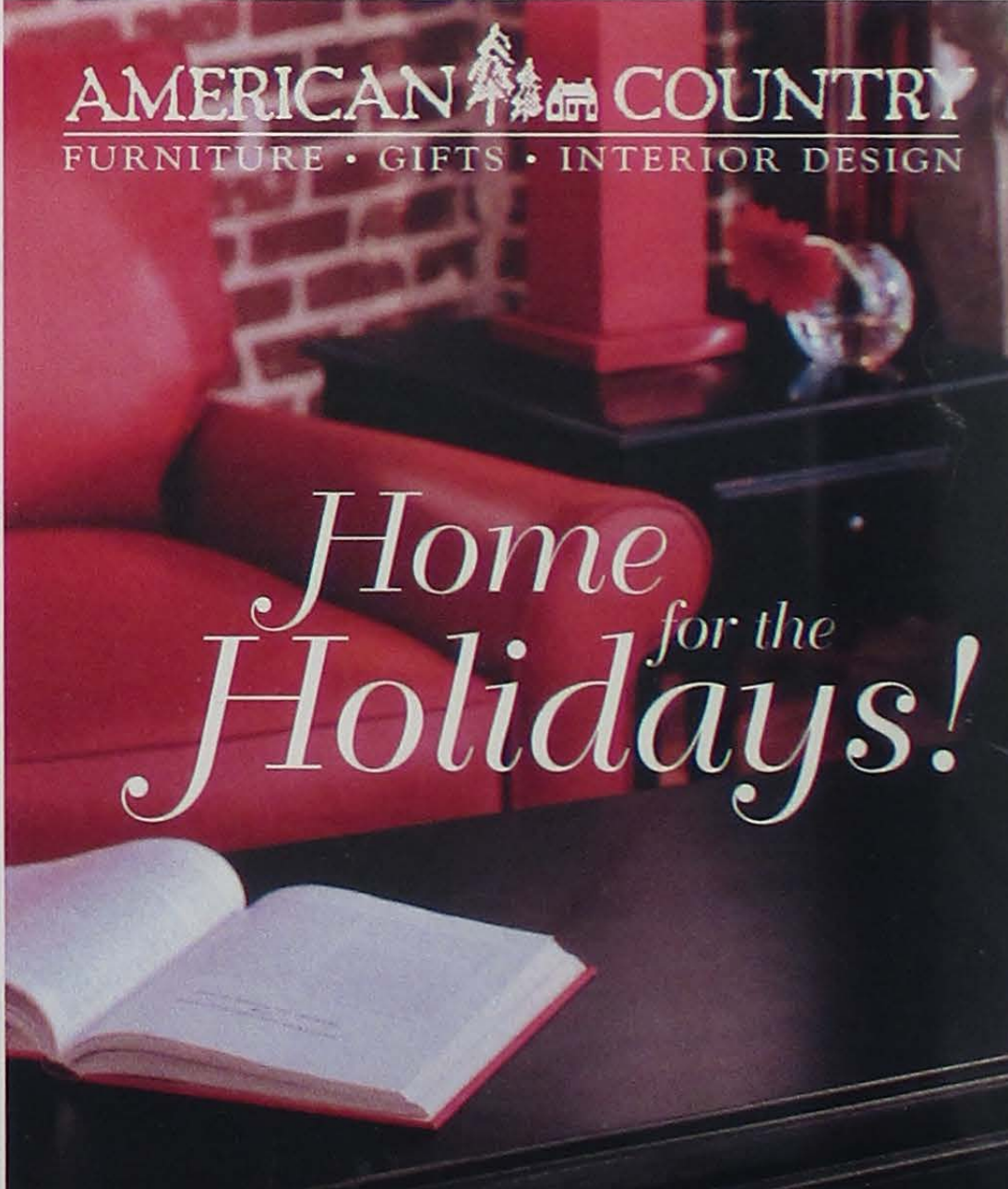
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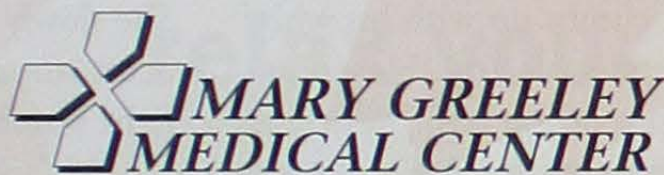
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- Boxed lunch
- Style Show & Lifestyle Fair

Event Agenda:

8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Registration

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. – Lifestyle Fair

9:30 to 10:30 a.m. – **Keynote Speaker, Karyn Buxman:**

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10:45 to 11:45 a.m. – Breakout Sessions

11:45 to 1 p.m. – Lunch Break

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1:15 to 2:15 p.m. – Breakout Sessions

2:30 to 3:30 p.m. – Breakout Sessions

3:45 to 4 p.m. – Door Prize Drawing

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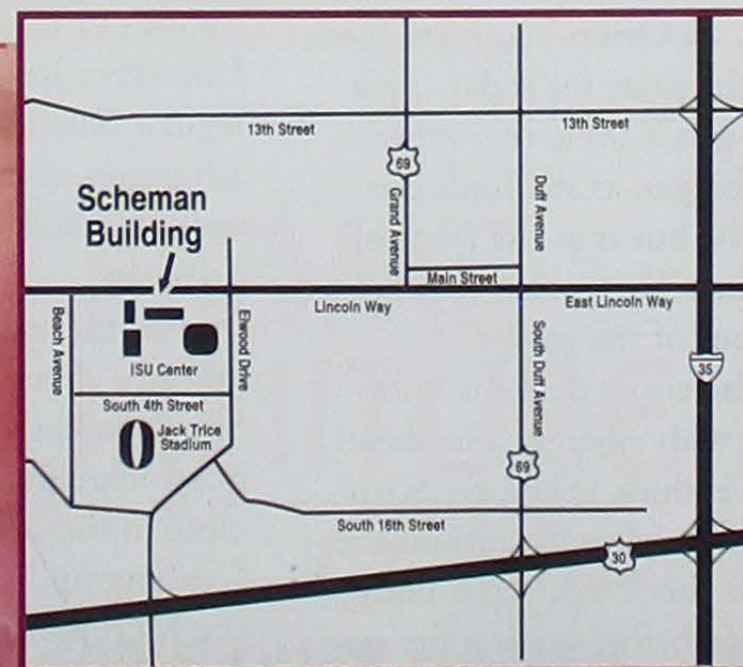
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Scheman Building,
Iowa State Center, Ames



By Frances Wilke
Facets Editor

With a warm and friendly demeanor, Rosemary Scott has shown up Monday through Friday for 10 years to ferry Ames residents back and forth 88 miles a day. Her day starts early. At 6 a.m., she clocks in and greets the dispatchers as she gets her bus assignment. Bus #953, an Orion V, a forty-footer is the draw for today. This news gets a smile that grows even bigger, as she finds out that the bus is at the front of the lane. This makes it easier to pull out of the garage.

The entire depot is humming with engines. The diesel smell is thick in the air. Scott takes a quick walk around the bus to check lights and body damage before leaving the station.

She loves this job.

"I especially like this time of

day," says Scott, as she pulls the bus out the station and heads east on Sixth Street along Brookside Park. "Watching Ames wake up is a treat all year round".

The first stop of her route is North Grand Mall. There is only one customer waiting.

Along the route, other early risers head to the Iowa State campus or to the Iowa State University Research Park. Some regular bus riders decide to take advantage of dry weather to walk, but still wave as Scott drives by.

Another regular, an older woman, chats easily with Scott. She is on her way to therapy. As Scott maneuvers the bus as close to the curb as possible, or "curbing up," she announces the McFarland Clinic and Mary Greeley Medical Center stops. The woman slowly gets up and throws her duffel bag down the steps.

Hail to the bus driver *ma'am*

She exits the bus walking backwards talking to Scott while clutching the rails.

"Thank you, and have a good day!" she shouts. Scott gives a nod and another smile.

As the bus nears the Iowa State campus, it starts to fill. It is a heavy load with all seats taken and people standing. Everyone looks sleepy and on their way to a 9 a.m. class.

"Hello David," Scott says to greet another regular rider. David Seaton, who is legally blind, climbs up with his white cane under his arm. He sits at the front of the bus. "Where are you going today? Are you headed to the library again?" Scott

"Ma'am," says Rosemary Scott into the loud speaker, "would you please pull your child's head back inside the bus."

asks. David laughs and looks at his Pokemon cards through thick lenses.

"Not telling you today Rosemary. It's a secret," Seaton chuckles. The secret doesn't last for long when Seaton alights at the library stop.

With a 6 a.m. start time,

lunch comes early at 9:30 a.m. Scott trades her bus with another driver for a Cy-Ride van. She munches on her homemade lunch and passes the time reading area obituary listings.

Thirty minutes later, she trades with another driver and her route begins again.

A mother and her three-year-old daughter board and sit in the back. The child sits alone, the mother on the opposite seat. The girl is up on her knees so she can see outside. She slowly opens the window. Scott stops the bus at a stop-light watching.

"Ma'am," says Scott into the loud speaker, "would you pull your child's head back inside the bus please."

The mother rebukes the child, but stays in her seat. Leaving nothing to chance, Scott heads to the back of the bus and shuts the windows tight. The mother looks annoyed at Scott as if there was nothing wrong. Scott smiles and nods, "I want everyone safe on my bus," says Scott.

By 2:30 p.m., Scott is back at the bus depot feeding her time card into the clock.

"I started this job to help pay off my student loans after getting an English degree at Iowa State," she says. "I have been so happy here; there isn't any reason to leave. What other job could I be out and about and still get benefits?" ♦

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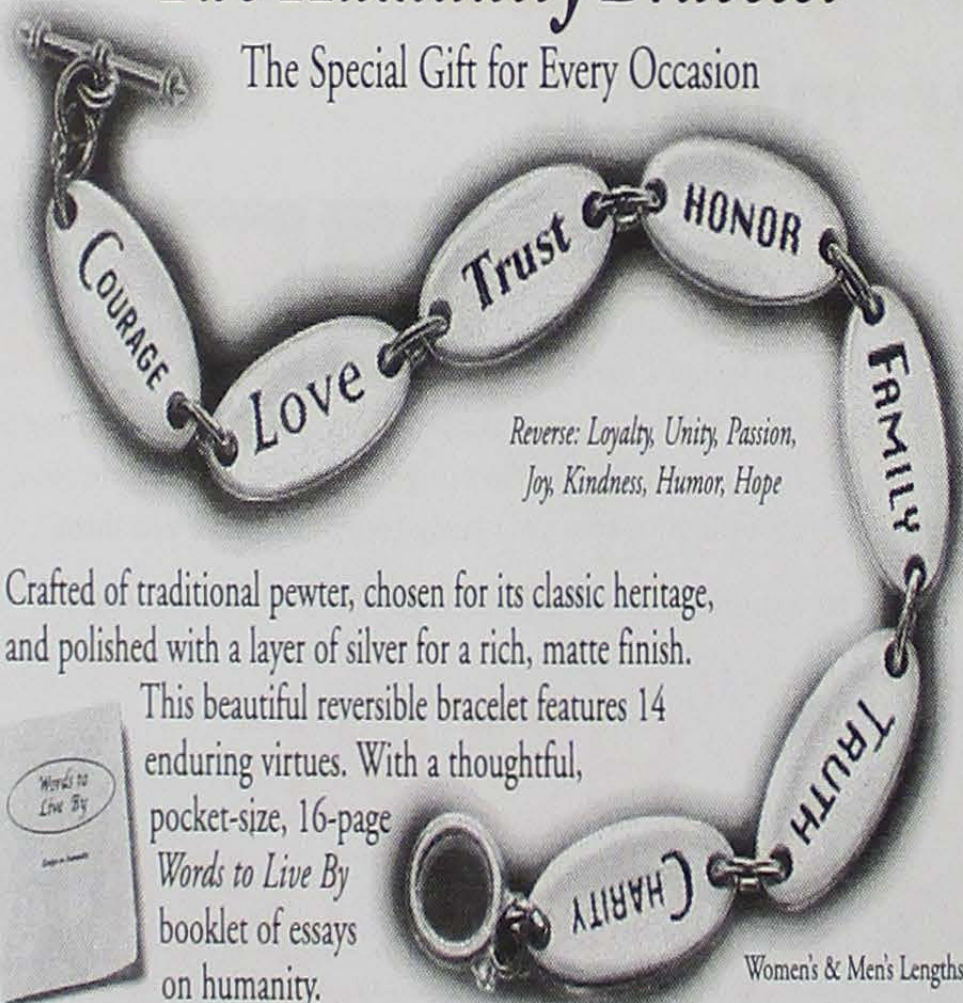
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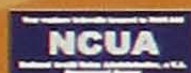
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what do we READ next?

Taking on the Family

By Janet E. Klaas

Holidays bring families together — sometimes happily, sometimes not so happily. This extended time together sometimes tests our resolve to just get along — to not mention the election to our in-laws, to not discuss religion with Aunt Lucille, to not notice out loud Cousin Max's new girth.

Adult children may or may not find three days with the

folks to be an entirely joyful experience and vice versa. In short, as Leo Tolstoy told us in "Anna Karenina," "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

The modern translation of that would be "All functional families are alike; each dysfunctional family is dysfunctional in its own way."

It is also true that the sto-

ries of unhappy/dysfunctional families make interesting reading; and, as a rule, happy families are rather dull. Either way, families are something we can relate to (the pun, unfortunately, is intended). Good books about family relationships are excellent choices for book groups. Here is a list for your consideration:

"Larry's Party," Carol Shields, 1997

This was the book that followed Carol Shields' Pulitzer Prize winning novel, "The Stone Diaries." It is, like that book, a study of one person's life and times, but features a man as the central character. Larry Weller, born in 1950, is traveling toward the 21st century, adapting to society's changing expectations of men. We follow his journey from 1977 to 1997 through two marriages and

divorces as he interacts with parents, friends, his wives, and a son. During this time, Weller, who is a floral designer, develops a passion for garden mazes. Mazes are so like life in that they promise great rewards while at the same time they delude us with false pathways.

"The Obedient Father," Akhil Sharma, 2000

This first novel tells the story of Ram Karan, a corrupt official in the physical education department of the Delhi school system. He lives with his widowed daughter and his little granddaughter. As his department's resident bribe collector, Ram is trapped in a series of escalating political betrayals. Though he tries to protect his family and himself, his daughter reveals a crime that he had hoped would be buried forever.

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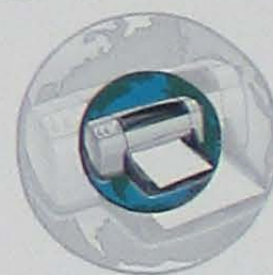
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Ram is as tormented, funny, and morally ambiguous as any of literature's antiheroes.

"Licks of Love," John Updike, 2000

I like this collection of stories because it contains a novella called "Rabbit Remembered," which wraps up Updike's famous Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom books ("Rabbit Run," "Rabbit Redux," "Rabbit is Rich," and "Rabbit at Rest"). Harry Angstrom is the penultimate antihero. "Rabbit Remembered" is set in the last months of 1999. Rabbit is no longer present at family functions, having died in "Rabbit at Rest;" but his ghost (metaphorically speaking) is taking part in all of the gatherings of his very dysfunctional, but engaging family.

"Noble Norfleet," Reynolds Price, 2002

"The first time I ever made real love with another human being, I thought I'd die. I didn't feel guilty, just smothered in pleasure. That same night my family vanished from the face of the Earth as far as I knew. I was seventeen years old." Here is the gripping story of the life of a boy suddenly devoid of family. His father had deserted the family — Noble, his brother Archer, his sister Adelle, and his mother. Then one night, he loses all of his family in one tragic event. All of this is related in the opening few pages of the novel. As Norbert's life unfolds, we see the power of family even in its absence.

"Family Matters," Rohinton Mistry, 2002

Set in Bombay in the mid-1990s, "Family Matters" is a story of familial love and obligation, which is both comic and tragic. Nariman Vakeel, the elderly family patriarch, is suffering from Parkinson's disease. His small discordant family occupies a once-elegant apartment whose

ruin is progressing as rapidly as Vakeel's malady. Rohinton's writing has been called "almost Tolstoyan in register and range." He writes with a patient attention to language and structure.

"We Are the Mulvaney," Joyce Carol Oates, 1997

In a tale told primarily from the point of view of the youngest son in the Mulvaney family, readers discover how each of the Mulvaneys struggles with a catastrophic event. In the first part of the book we are introduced to the lovely, successful Mulvaneys, their smart and charming children, and their middle-class milieu. When the only daughter in the family of four children is raped, the novel becomes a saga of shame and redemption. Oates raises philosophical issues within an examination of American violence. Her unblinking curiosity about human nature is one of the great artistic forces of contemporary literature.

"Monsoon Diary; a Memoir with Recipes," Shoba Narayan, 2003

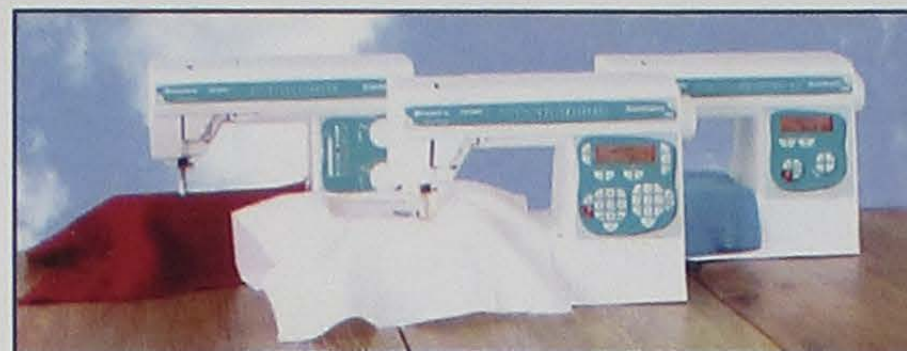
Just to end on a happy note, here is a memoir of a happy family. Shoba Narayan recounts her childhood in south India, her college days in America, her arranged marriage, and visits from her parents and in-laws in New York City. This is a fascinating food narrative that combines recipes and food lore with tales of her delightfully eccentric family—her mercurial grandparents and inventive parents. It is also populated with characters like Raju, the milkman who names his cows after his wives and the ironmonger who sets up shop in her family's front yard, picking up the red-hot coals with his bare hands. In this country, Narayan comments on American culture from the vantage point of a sympathetic outsider. This book is a joy to read. ♦

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IT IS IN HER

nature

By Frances Wilke
Facets Editor

It's Tuesday at 5 p.m. and darkness has fallen. Outside the starlings gather in the trees for the evening. Inside, 29 twelve-to-sixteen year old children chatter like birds waiting for their teacher to signal the start of their rehearsal.

Scott MacDonald, 12, takes his place at the worn, white piano and plays a piece of his last recital with the flourish of a concert pianist. Adolescents giggle in friendly groups. Two girls dart around the room in a game of tag. It's a harmonious atmosphere with a purpose.

Sylvia Munsen quickly gathers her music scores before calling the group to order. Warming up with a "Whooo-wooo," sounding like a police siren, Munsen practices her craft/vocation in the basement of the Collegiate United Methodist Church. The pine walls give a little warmth to the room, but it is the love affair the teacher and children have with the music, that gives the room a comfortable temperature.

This Story City native has conducted choirs for the last 30 years in Minnesota,



Illinois, Maryland, Washington and Arizona, with the last 10 in Iowa. As Iowa State University's chairwoman of the music education department, she could not be better suited for her job.

In 1995, Munsen formed the Ames Children's Choirs and led them to international renown, performing in the Czech Republic, Vancouver, British Columbia and Carnegie Hall in New York City. The choir performed with Simon

Estes, bass-baritone opera singer and Iowa native during the Midwest Children's Choir Festival last summer.

This summer the concert choir will celebrate its 10th anniversary season with a solo concert at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

Munsen gives all the credit to the children.

"It's about the children, teaching them to strive for excellence, that even if they

have an ordinary voice, with hard work, they can become the best," says Munsen. "Sure, it gives them good self esteem, but it also teaches them to work, and that hard work can be fun."

Choir member Teresa Zaffarano, 12, agrees. "It's fun, but it's hard too. Dr. Munsen teaches us exactly what we need to do, and she is very good about teaching us the method, so that it comes together easily."

ENCORE

- ◆ The Ames Children's Choir consists of three groups totaling 75 children.
- ◆ Preparatory Choir: ages 8-10. \$275 Yearly Tuition
- ◆ Chorale: ages 10-12. \$300 Yearly Tuition
- ◆ Concert Choir: ages 12-16. \$450 Yearly Tuition
- ◆ Scholarships are available to families in need of financial assistance.
- ◆ Auditions will be held on Jan. 5-8 for spring entry into preparatory choir and chorale.
- ◆ Auditions for the remaining choirs are the last two weeks in May and the last two weeks in August.
- ◆ For more information, or to arrange for an audition time, call 290-1422.

"Ninety-five percent of people can sing, and not badly either," says Munsen, when asked about recruiting members.

The idea that this group is only for the elite student may cross one's mind if considering where the choir has performed in recent years. Munsen quotes Aristotle to guide the children, her students and herself. "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

Karen Paxton agrees. Her daughter Megan, 13, has been a member for four years and daughter Natalie, 8, for one year.

"The girls' grades shot up after being in the choir," Paxton said. "They realized that if they put in that extra 15 percent of effort, they can achieve so much more. The choir has taught them how to really strive for excellence".

Munsen is very much a multi-faceted woman. She's an avid antique collector, cook, and loves to entertain friends in her

home. She also is the author of a cookbook titled "Cooking the Norwegian Way." For four years, Munsen was a member of a trio called the Chenilles, who performed on Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion."

At a time when sports cover front pages in the news, it would fair to compare the Ames Children's Choirs achievements to a state championship team. They have been invited all over the United States to perform, as well as internationally.

Considering they practice only two hours a week, and have no physical injuries, it stands as a record in excellence. Not to mention that a ticket to see the choir in action is considerably less than one would pay to see a basketball game.

The city of Ames should be clamoring for an encore. ◆

Facets Editor Frances Wilke can be reached at 232-2161, Ext. 346 or at fwilke@amestrib.com.

to
nurture



mother & child

Letting them win *Or did you?*

By Malisa Rader



While folding what seemed to be an endless amount of laundry, I told my two children that it was bath time. Usually it's a struggle to get them to stop what they are doing to shower. But for some reason on this night, they both raced up the steps and proceeded to argue over who was going to take a bath first. I continued to fold laundry while keeping an ear on their progress.

Their conclusion was to flip a coin to decide who got the bathroom first. I was feeling pretty smug about my parenting skills and my children's ability to solve their own problems. That feeling lasted about 15 seconds. It wasn't hard to figure out what happened ... I'm sure the neighbors could hear as well.

The argument was no longer about being first in the tub. It had now turned into a dispute over the proper toss of a coin. My six-year-old son tried to explain to his four-year-old sister that it wasn't how the coin landed (making her the winner), but that she should have placed the coin on the back of her other hand (making him the winner). Inevitably, I heard the race downstairs. After all, it's a well known fact that whoever gets to mom first and tells their version of the story is the "winner."

I continued to fold the mounds of laundry in front of me as I listened to their woes. There was no good way to handle this situation. Someone was going to end up disap-

pointed. Since my daughter was arguing her point in the nude, I decided to send her up first for a bath. Of course, this did not sit well with my son who continued to argue his position and soon resorted to whining about the unfairness of the situation.

As a naïve parenting educator, I likely would have advised the parent in a similar circumstance to ignore the negative behavior and continue folding the laundry. I now realize you can only ignore for so long and, inevitably, children with a point to make have a stronger willpower than an exhausted parent.

My gut reaction was to lecture my son on how trivial this issue was and that whining was not going to change the situation. Experience has taught me that this discussion would have fallen on deaf ears. Instead I chose a third option, "Let's play a game while we wait." Shock, confusion, and disbelief all describe the look on my son's face. Had he won or lost? After several rounds of Connect Four, it no longer seemed to matter and he happily took his bath after his sister.

No lecture. No lesson. No loser. Just enjoying each other's company. So maybe my laundry didn't get folded directly out of the dryer. We had not only survived a difficult circumstance but had also thrived by keeping all of our sanity in check.

What a great feeling! ♦

Malisa Rader is the parent coordinator for Iowa State University's Child Development Laboratory School.

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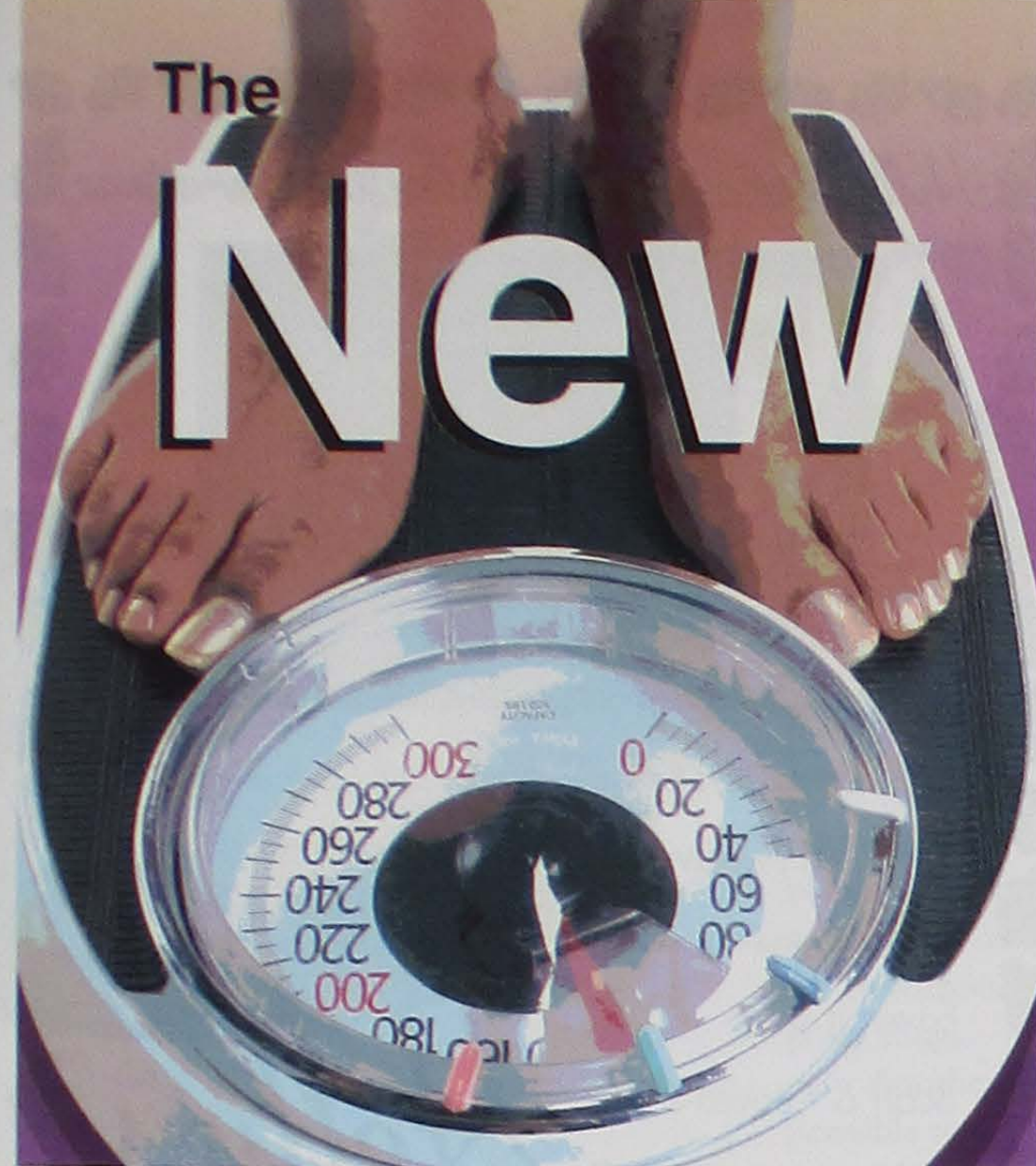
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RESOLUTION SOLUTION

By Debra Atkinson

You count down to midnight, blow your noisemaker, toast out the old and in the new and make those bold self-declarations otherwise known as New Year's Resolutions. Another January has arrived.

Admirable goals of quitting smoking, reducing alcohol or caffeine consumption, eliminating sugar, and oh but of course, losing weight and exercising more, may have sounded something like license to make another round at the buffet table last month, but this month they are staring you in the face. Whatever it may be that compels you to make that resolution — the tradition, the convenient transitional time of year to take stock of where you are and where you want to go or the guilt over too many indulgences at last year's end — many of you make them.

Joyce Hagley still is a believer. She makes resolutions

every year. Last year atop her list was to lose 10 pounds. Her other goals included "watch my cussing" and "stop yelling." How did she do? On a scale of one to 10, her self-rating was a six. The weight didn't come off. The swearing and yelling are "better."

There are, however, two camps. There seems to be a growing number of non-believers. Too many exercise plans, grapefruit diets and quitting-smoking cold-turkey attempts — abandoned by Groundhog's Day — haven't exactly reinforced success. The reality is that you haven't failed. It was the system! At no other time of year do you expect to set a goal and have it transform you overnight. Unrealistic expectations lead to disaster. For instance, exercising every day for someone who has been inactive is a ridiculously lofty goal. Quitting sugar, caffeine or

continued on page 16

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continued from page 15

alcohol altogether, if it's a big part of your lifestyle, is too perfectionist to serve you well.

The changes that take place to reach a new weight, become smoke free, or seek out new employment or relationship opportunities — all which are common resolutions — are behavioral goals.

Too many resolutions focus on outcome goals. You want to know what you get at the end much more than what it takes doing today to get there. Although those long-term goals can be motivating, when you are taking the first steps up the mountain, a to-do list is what will keep you moving forward.

The difference can be described as either desire or intent. Losing 10 pounds to fit into old jeans is desire. Exercising 30 minutes, three times a week, in a target heart-rate range, is your intent to do something about it. The former is wishing; the latter is empowering.

What can you do to insure that your resolutions, should you decide to make them, are effective?

Give yourself some latitude. Perfectionists often clean out the refrigerator and vow to drop in on the exercise alter, daily, for 30 minutes and 30 days in a row. If you are one of these folks, missing a day or eating out might mean abandoning the whole plan. Flexibility, not rigidity, leads you down a more productive road to your goals.

Be specific by following those behavioral goal suggestions. Toning up is not specific. Going to the gym at 5 o'clock, three times a week to weight train, is specific. Losing weight is not specific. Decreasing the calories you eat by 200 every day, and increasing the calories you use by 200 every day, is specific.

Write your goals down. Hagley said that she kept her resolutions on the refrigerator for a

long time. Posting them where you'll see them every day also reinforces your commitment to goals. Moving toward a goal isn't always a linear path. Looking over a written log at a time when it seems you've taken two steps back, can help you see there is progress.

Be sure the goal is realistic. Wanting to lose 20 pounds by Valentine's Day may be your goal. But safe, permanent weight loss occurs at a rate of no more than 1-2 pounds per week. Depending on your exercise history and activity, your loss may show up in inches and body fat rather than on the scale. For Hagley, 10 pounds didn't come off but her exercise routine and health, as well as her body composition, improved. She admits that success may still be too tied to a number on the scale. But for her, that isn't realistic.

Assess whether you have the skills to do it alone. Evaluate whether you need some instruction in weight training, a cardiovascular exercise or a smoking cessation program. Or like many, do you need a dietician to determine what to eat again?

Set your goals in a positive frame. If you focus on what you can't have (candy, caffeine, alcohol or cigarettes) it becomes all about deprivation. Who is motivated by that? Instead, focus on what you can do. Set a goal to include more water, or more fruits and vegetables (more specific than that of course!) in your daily diet.

Hagley has set resolutions again this year. Among them she said is treating herself better. Self-nurturing alone is an excellent goal. Combining it with any other resolution could be the ultimate solution to the bright shiny new year. ♦

Debra Atkinson is a senior lecturer in Iowa State University's department of health and human performance and the personal training director at Ames Racquet and Fitness.

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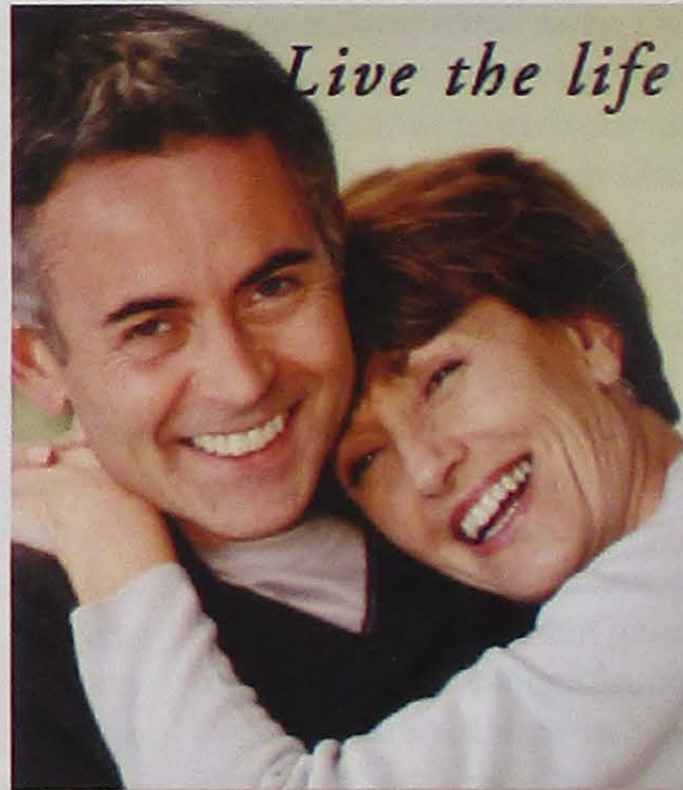
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gift of the fungi

By Christine Engelbrecht



This is the season when we give thanks for many blessings — family, friends and a bountiful harvest. We probably never think to be thankful for an unlikely blessing — fungi.

When we think of fungi, we usually picture dangerous toadstools, moldy basements and nasty diseases of toenails and plants. In fact, many fungi provide useful services that we could not live without. Perhaps we should be grateful for the many blessings of fungi.

The majority of fungi make their living as “saprobies,” or consumers of dead organic matter, such as fallen leaves or downed logs. As the fungi decompose, these dead plant bodies release the nutrients from the dead material back into the soil, where it can be used by living plants once again.

These fungi are essential recyclers of nutrients. Besides simply removing dead organisms and a pileup of dead

plant material, these fungi allow other plants and animals to use the nutrients and grow. The natural world could not thrive without these important decomposer fungi.

Another way that fungi are indispensable to us is as plant helpers, called mycorrhizae, which means fungus-root. The roots of nearly all land plants are intimately attached to thread-like fungal bodies.

The fungus branches out from the roots in all directions and act as an extension of the plant's root system, absorbing extra water and minerals, which it gives to the plant. In return, the plant gives the fungus food in the form of sugars, so the relationship between the plant and fungus is mutually beneficial.

About 90 percent of plant species, including nearly all trees, are known to have mycorrhizae. Plants without mycorrhizae generally do quite poorly compared with those that have these fungal friends. Many of the mushrooms that have been popping up under trees during the fall, are the above-ground fruiting bodies of mycorrhizal fungi.

Although they usually go unseen, fungi that serve as mycorrhizae are critical to the survival of the plants we rely on and enjoy.

The third group of fungi to be thankful for is perhaps the most obvious — the edible fungi. Hundreds of different species of fungi are edible, and some are among the finest delicacies in the world. Anyone who has ever tasted a morel fried in butter or eaten pizza topped with button mushrooms, knows

that our diets would be less flavorful without fungi. European truffles are so tasty that they can sell for over \$450 per pound.

Although it is a simple, one-celled organism, yeast is a fungus that has been essential to our way of life for millennia. Yeast is critical for making bread and fermented beverages. Fermentation results when yeast cells consume the sugars in beverages or bread dough and give off alcohol and carbon dioxide. The alcohol is the primary product of interest for alcoholic beverages, while the carbon dioxide helps bread dough rise by filling it with air.

As we give thanks this holiday season, it may be time to acknowledge the contributions of an often-overlooked group of organisms — the humble fungi. ♦

Christine Engelbrecht is a plant pathologist for Iowa State University Extension.



five ways to love your skin in the new year

The new year is the time to reflect on the past year and anticipate the future. It is a time to reevaluate and to resolve to improve things in the New Year. The desire to improve upon the old is often seen with the new diet and increased attendance at health clubs in January.

In our clinics we also see an increased demand for cosmetic procedures around the holidays and into the new year. One of the most frequent questions relates to what simple, inexpensive measures one can take to improve the complexion.

In order to assist you in the preparation of your New Year's resolutions, I have prepared a list of five simple and inexpensive things you can do to significantly improve the quality of your skin and give you the radiant complexion that we all desire to achieve.

1 Apply a SPF 30 sunscreen each morning.

Several good oil-free moisturizers with sunscreen are available at minimal cost. Sun-and-tanning-bed exposure ages the skin and damages the complexion more than any other factor.

2 Stop smoking.

The use of cigarettes and the associated toxic effects of tobacco cause wrinkles and can discolor and age the skin. This choice saves money and might even save your life.

3 Use appropriate skin care products.

For women over 30, the use of an eye cream and appropriate moisturizers

and facial washes (with antioxidants) in the evening can improve the overall appearance of the skin.

4 Try several brands of cosmetics.

Often, one of the more economical brands will give you significantly better results than some of the more expensive brands.

5 Visit your skin care specialist who can provide you with specific recommendations for optimizing your complexion.

Ask about a prescription for a retinoid such as Retin A or Differin.

A skin care specialist also can give you access to skin care products that have a greater concentration of

active ingredients than those that are available in salons and department stores. You can also get the information you need to move on to the next level of care with chemical peels, microdermabrasion and photofacials.

These resolutions will improve one of your most important assets — your face. I guarantee that these simple measures will give you quicker, more lasting results and will be easier to keep throughout the year than that diet or exercise program. ♦

Charles W. Love, M.D. is a certified dermatologist and owner of Radiant Complexions Dermatology Clinic Inc. in Ames.



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Food BITES

By Frances Wilke
Facets Editor



the versatile pear

Bartlett

Pears are a winter fruit that people don't appreciate as much as they should.

Dare I say I am peering down on January?

Alternatively, pear down your life.

Either way it is a darn good fruit at a reasonable price per serving.

Here in central Iowa, all of our local stores have several varieties available. I suspect their popularity is not too high because folks don't know how to pick them. Or, maybe they haven't a clue as to when they are ripe or rotten.

Here are some things to look for when choosing your pears.

Bosc pears have a brown and papery dull skin. They are best raw when fresh, if cooking is too much trouble. They have a crisp texture and mild flavor, which to the uninitiated is a

nice change, or misidentified as not yet ripe. However, their true flavor comes from being poached and served as a fancy low-calorie dessert or a low-calorie base for decadent sauce.

Let's be real here, having something simple can be a vehicle for indulgence. Chocolate is the first weapon of choice. Juxtaposing the smooth dark liquid creates a nice compliment to the taste. Even the look of the dish is cool. Think architecture here — a creamy white peak surrounded by a pool of chocolate. Not a chocolate fan? Try a cold sabayon sauce, which is an egg and cream concoction that has a bit of Madiera wine in it. And if that is too much trouble then try drizzling some Chambord, which is a dark raspberry liqueur, and call it done.

Anjou pears come in red and green, they have a thick,

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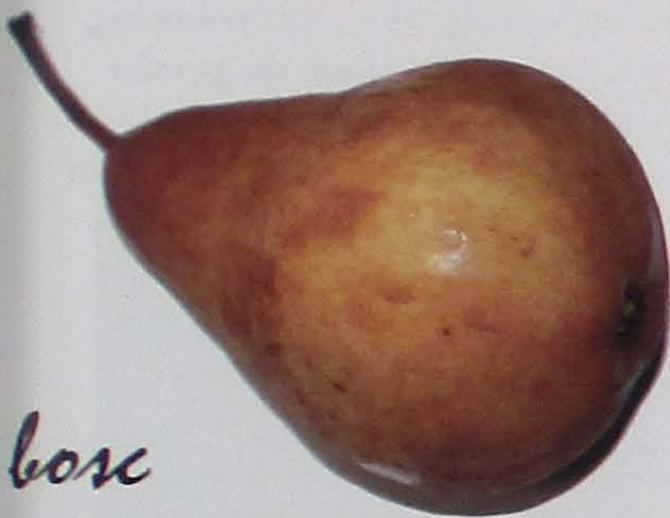
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anjou



anjou



bosc

fat shape and a finer texture than a Bartlett pear. It can be described as more of a creamy tender fleshed fruit with a perfume like aroma. You can tell it is at its peak by a very slight give to the touch. Too much give and its past it's prime.

Bartlett pears are the industry standard. They start out a light green and ripen to a golden yellow. Cut into halves and bake with the skin on at 350 degrees for one hour. It becomes a chewy treat with a grainy texture. It's also very nice when served warm with vanilla ice cream.

Lastly, if you have never tasted a dried pear, you are missing one of the more divine dried fruits available. Served along side of a slice of Maytag blue cheese and it is as near to an ethereal experience as you can get with your heart still pumping.

Just a note

With tomatoes so rare and expensive this winter, try the dried or canned varieties for a change. Dried tomatoes in your next salad can be a welcome change. Don't forget that a little goes a long way.

For salsas, some canned tomatoes can make a passable dish. Make sure you have your peppers pack a little heat to carry it off, slip in a Pablano pepper, which has a nice crunch, and less heat than a jalapeño.

Craving bruchetta? Try sautéing mushrooms for bruchetta instead of the regular recipe. As the song says, a change will do you good.

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Five egg yolks
2 tablespoons sugar
2/3 cups of Madera wine
1 cup of whipping cream

Wisk yolks, sugar and wine in a double boiler. Stir constantly until the mixture is thick and has cooked for close to five

minutes. Remove from the stove and cool in the fridge. Beat whipping cream until soft peak stage. Carefully fold the egg mixture into the whipped cream. This dish can be made along with the poached pear, for up to six hours before serving.



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The lure of nostalgia

By Heidi Marttila-Losure

I'm a sucker for nostalgia.

You don't have to talk to me for long to figure this out. My husband and I live in a home built in 1890; the fact that its fir trim wasn't painted was a big selling point. Our dining room table and chairs have been handed down a couple generations, and we've gathered up many unwanted old books from our older relatives as well. And I love the idea of doing things the old-fashioned way — making ice cream outside on a summer evening with a hand crank, preparing coffee beans with an old-style grinder, or filling Ball jars with sauce made from homegrown tomatoes.

A wave of nostalgia overtook me last month when my husband and I took a trip to Missouri and stopped to have breakfast and stretch our legs in Hannibal, the hometown of Mark Twain. Many buildings along the town's Main Street are on the National Register of Historic Places, and as much as possible of that riverfront downtown's small-town Americana charm has been preserved.

Oh, to live in that simpler time, I found myself thinking.

But after a few wistful sighs, I started to wonder if I really would have wanted to live in Mark Twain's era. So I did a little reading. Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States" proved a good resource — most of the quotes that follow are from that book.

A 26-year-old woman, living in the 1800s, would almost certainly be married. (If not, she would be deemed well into spinsterhood.) This would be a good thing if she had been able to marry a good man, but if she had married unwisely, marriage would be a life sentence of misery. One woman facing marriage in 1791 wrote, "The die is about to be cast which will probably determine the future happiness or misery of my life ... I

have always anticipated the event with a degree of solemnity almost equal to that which will terminate my present existence."

Women were in large part considered the property of their husbands, and some husbands thought disciplining and training of wives was as necessary as it was for hunting dogs. One woman described women's legal situation in the colonial period: "The husband's control over the wife's person extended to the right of giving her chastisement ... But he was not entitled to inflict permanent injury or death on his wife." (Parts of this legal view didn't go away until far more recent times — even 1966, according to the Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse, a law in New York enacted to make beating grounds for divorce still mandated that a plaintiff must establish that a "sufficient" number of beatings had occurred.)

Moreover, in many states a woman's property, either in whole or in part, became the property of her husband when they married. Any wages she earned during their marriage likewise went to her husband — which wasn't much, as women earned a fourth to half of what men earned for the same work. And they weren't always allowed to do the same work — women were shut out of the professions of law, medicine or the ministry. When a man died, his assets generally went to his oldest son, and his widow was at her son's mercy for support.

As the Industrial Revolution required more workers than the male population could provide, many young women got factory jobs — for example at the textile mills in Lowell, Mass. While the experience at first seemed "a welcome escape from household drudgery or domestic service," Zinn writes, the dormitories where they lived soon became prisonlike, where work days that

began at 4 a.m. and ended at 7:30 p.m. were followed with a meal that sometimes consisted only of bread and gravy. The conditions in the factories were horrible; many women died young, of causes that related directly to the work they were doing — lead poisoning, for example, that resulted from the powder used on patterns in embroidery factories.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire in New York in 1911 was probably the worst story. A fire swept up through the top floors of the factory building higher than the firemen's ladders could reach. The workers, mostly women, had been locked into their rooms so the company could keep better track of them. In the end, 146 workers were burned or crushed to death against the locked exit doors.

This wasn't really the past I had been nostalgic for. But that's the danger of nostalgia — our view of past events often isn't accurate.

We have plenty of problems as we start 2005 — among them higher divorce rates, rising personal and national debt, overscheduled lives, the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer — but trying to go back to some wonderful time in the past won't work. No matter how good it looks from here, that era had its own problems.

The only way to make things better is to learn from the past, then turn around and move on, because looking back with a wistful sigh is a dangerous way to walk into the future.



Heidi Marttila-Losure is a copy editor at *The Tribune*. Contact her at hlosure@amestrib.com.



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